

ILLINOIS **FAMILIES** **Now and** **Forever**

Families by Foster Care, Adoption and Guardianship®

Department of Children and Family Services®



From the DCFS Director

Bryan Samuels

Each year, state agencies participate in state budget deliberation. And, this year DCFS fared well. Having a fiscal year 2006 budget of \$1.3 billion affords DCFS the financial resources to maintain current services as well as fund additional critical practice initiatives.

We project ending this fiscal year with 18,299 youth in our care, and anticipate that number to stay stable in 2006. This is the lowest number of children in care in the past 15 years. However, the cost per child in care is increasing. Our children in care are older, they stay in care longer and their needs are more complex and require more attention.

We are adapting our current services and developing new services to meet the needs of each of our children in care. We are streamlining decision-making. We are monitoring outcomes of youth leaving residential facilities. We are anticipating and addressing the trauma of children exposed to violence. We are expanding the options for chronic runaways.

I believe we have the resources to do what needs to be done. With your assistance we will meet the needs of each youth in our care.

Child and youth investment teams offer new path to services

Soon there will be a new way to access placement changes and services to support youth in care. As part of the overall Lifetime Approach, DCFS is introducing Child and Youth Investment Teams (CAYIT, pronounced “say-it”). Caseworkers will refer children and youth to the investment teams any time it appears the child may need more intensive placement or services.

In many cases, the caregiver may require the support of additional services to meet the needs of the children in care. Other times, the child’s needs cannot be met by the current caregiver, even with support. Then the child may need another type of placement, such as specialized foster care, residential or transitional living.

The new CAYIT process replaces the old Placement Review Teams (PRT) for residential placement, Specialized Foster Care review, and will be the pathway to transitional and independent living programs. CAYIT will also respond to children and youth who are moving too often.



“The investment teams will be empowered to directly access all services and programs,” said DCFS Director Bryan Samuels. “The goal is to get kids what they need when they need it.”

Once a referral is made, the CAYIT comes together to assist in planning for what comes next. The CAYIT includes a facilitator, reviewer, intake staff and an implementation coordinator in addition to the casework staff, family and caregivers. The investment team meetings will be held at various sites throughout the DCFS regions to accommodate geographic and time challenges and encourage the caregiver’s participation.

Continued on page 2

CAYIT, con't.

The team will rely on the caregiver to share information on the child or youth's behaviors, strengths, and needs. They can comment on what has and has not worked to meet the needs. Most importantly, they can speak to what they feel is needed now. Taken together with information from others on the team, including the child or youth, the team will work together to develop an action plan that begins right away—getting in place whatever is needed.

The investment teams will be able to identify the youth's service and placement needs without restriction to program type. If the youth needs a service that the worker cannot access, the team will be able to identify and access those resources. If the youth needs to be moved to a different placement type, the team will determine that and match the youth to a provider. The CAYIT process will track the service and placement decisions to see if they are making a difference, and that they will be able to make adjustments as needed.

Orientations and trainings about the child and youth investment team process are already underway. At least 15 days before implementation, agencies and workers will receive notification of a statewide CAYIT question line. Everyone will have ample information to ensure an effective and smooth transition to this new and exciting process.

Using Love and Logic can make discipline effective and fun

There are times when a child's behavior can leave a parent speechless. Maybe it was intentional defiance that drops your jaw. Maybe it was simply watching behavior that defies all rational thought. If you parent long enough, at some point, you will find yourself with nothing left to do but to throw up your hands and scratch your head. But, if it happens too often, it is easy to forget just how much you love this child who can drive you to the edge of reason. Love and Logic® is one approach to discipline that can help.

“Love and Logic” parents teach positive behavior by letting a child learn from logical consequences combined with their loving understanding. Logical consequences, when delivered with empathy, force children to think very hard about their poor decisions. This approach was refined by Jim Fay and Foster Cline of the Love and Logic Institute of Golden Colorado. These education and child welfare experts along with many colleagues have built a wealth of materials and trainings for parents and educators, including those caring for children with special needs. For just about every scenario, they have a response.

For example, your sixth grade basketball superstar says he got a detention and will miss the bus to the basketball game—if you don't give him a ride. Logic would

suggest that the lesson learned by missing the game and getting heat from his teammates could go a long way in preventing another detention. The love part comes from the parent using empathy to replace the urge to get mad or to grant the ride with grumbling. Instead, you'd calmly and sincerely say, “I'm sorry you will miss the game. I know this one was a big one. I'll be waiting for you as soon as your detention is over.”

The Love and Logic materials are practical and easy to use. One important aspect is that the techniques can protect the child-adult relationship by giving real-life answers to situations that would usually set off arguments. In many instances parents can use humor to re-direct conflicts. Just a change of attitude can go a long way in making a parent feel better and gain patience during the tough job of shifting a child's behavior.

Discipline and behavior management was at the top of the list in the 2004 reader survey. The Love and Logic approach is one of many tools available to parents. Caregivers should consider the needs of their family to determine how or if these resources may be applicable. The Love and Logic Institute has a catalogue of materials at the website www.loveandlogic.com and a toll-free customer service line at 800-338-4065.

Get children ready for summer camp now

Summer camp is a fun, “rite of passage” that can sometimes be complicated for children with special needs. Fortunately, there are resources to help the child and the caregiver make the best decisions. Talk to your caseworker to determine what your child needs and what resources are available for summer activities. DCFS foster families should ask about the financial assistance available, the approval process and the reimbursement procedures. For private agency foster families, the policy can differ from agency to agency. Every agency receives funds for “nonrecurring expenses” such as camp for some children. Ask your child’s caseworker about the camp policy for children served by your agency.

Where to begin looking:

- Ask people you know, such as other foster parents or school parents for recommendations.
- Your child’s school may have a local camp for sports or academics. Also check out higher education institutions for special programs for elementary and high school children.
- Your local church may have a youth camp or even a youth group that may take a small trip. (Be sure to ask about birth parent permission for a religious program).
- Ask your child’s caseworker for information on special needs camps focusing on



ADHD or physical and developmental disabilities.

- Check organizations like the YMCA, Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts for local camps.
- Contact the DCFS Local Area Network (LAN) liaison in your region for community-based programs.

Don’t forget!

- Check with your caseworker regarding reimbursement procedures.
- Make sure you have proof of a current physical before registration.
- Ask about policies for dispensing medications at camp.
- Ask your caseworker about the policy for traveling to an out-of-state camp.
- Send your camper off with stationery and stamps so you can receive letters.
- Send a letter to your camper early so it will arrive on the first day of camp.

DCFS and Chapin Hall study placement changes

The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) has partnered with the Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago to examine factors contributing to placement instability in foster care.

Chapin Hall will be conducting a web-based survey of 1,500 DCFS and private agency caseworkers. Additionally, many foster parents will be asked to contribute their input. The survey will include questions about children’s experiences in their current and past placements, foster home characteristics, and caseworker characteristics. The information gained from this study will be used to help DCFS better understand this issue and to improve programs and services for foster children and their families.

Caseworkers will be randomly selected to participate in the survey. Participation is mandatory. Caseworkers and supervisors who are selected to participate in the study will be notified through their Field Service Managers, Area Regional Administrators, or Agency Managers. Foster parents will be contacted in the coming months and asked to participate. Results should be available in 2006.

Check on recall information to keep children safe

Keeping young children in a safe environment means paying attention to the smallest details. Department policy requires foster parents of children aged six or under to check their homes for products listed as unsafe according to the Children's Product Safety Act. To stay informed of new recall information, parents or caseworkers can obtain the list of unsafe products by contacting the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) 217-782-4977. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission maintains a product list, along with other helpful information at www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/prerel/prerel.html. Another source for up-to-date information is Family Education at www.Familyeducation.com. The site also offers a subscription feature to send automatic updates by e-mail. Following are a few of the products for young children that have been recalled recently:

"Toy Tunes" Electronic Musical Toys

Dollar Tree Dist. is recalling the Toy Tunes. The multicolored toys come in the shape of a drum and a xylophone, and are sold with a drumstick for playing the musical toy. The ball on the end of the drumstick can break off during use, posing a choking hazard to young children. Consumers should immediately take these toys away from young children and return the recalled toys to the store where purchased.

Electric Scooters

GSI Commerce Solutions, doing business as Spartan Sports, is recalling models FS-101 and FS-102 of Spartan Sports electric scooters. The scooters have adjustable handlebars, collapsible parts, and a stepping plate and kickstand attached to the base. A knob can loosen and cause the handlebar to detach from the scooter. Additionally, the folding joint lock on the model FS-101 scooter can break, causing the handlebars to release from the upright position. Both hazards can cause the rider to lose control and fall from the scooter.

Baby Walker

Big Save International recalls Baby Walker. Only Big Save baby walkers with model numbers 9026, 9028, 9090, 90110 and 90111 are included in this recall. The walkers fit through a standard doorway and are not designed to stop at the edge of a step. These walkers can also tip over. Babies using these walkers can be seriously injured or killed. Consumers should immediately stop using the recalled walkers and return them to the retailer where purchased to receive a refund.

Flashing Pacifier Shock Baby Necklace

Todo Dollar Wholesale recalls Flashing Pacifier with Whistle Necklace and Flashing Pacifier Shock Baby Necklace Units. The recalled pacifier necklace consists of a 28-inch multi-colored cord with a 3-inch plastic pacifier that comes in assorted colors. The pacifier handle operates as the on-off button for the flashing light on both pacifiers. The nipple can detach from the pacifier, posing a choking hazard to young children. Consumers should return the pacifiers to the store where purchased to receive a refund.

Baby Björn Infant Carriers

Regal Lager recalls "Baby Björn" Infant Carriers in Model number 1-260. The carriers are made of a cotton polyester blend fabric in black with red piping and blue with white piping. The back support buckle can detach from the shoulder straps, posing a fall hazard to the baby. The firm has received 93 reports of the back support buckle detaching from the shoulder straps on the infant carrier. Consumers should immediately stop using the carrier and contact Regal Lager at (877) 962-8400 for instructions on returning the carriers for repair.

Monster Rockets

Hasbro Inc. recalls Super Soaker Monster Rockets. The Super Soaker Monster Rocket is composed of a 7-foot inflatable mylar rocket with a plastic and foam fin section. The rocket has a blue and orange launch base with a water pressure tank attached to one leg of the base. The cap on the water tank can unexpectedly and forcibly project off when it is quickly unscrewed from the tank, posing a risk of impact injuries to users or bystanders.

Place baby on back to sleep to avoid SIDS

No words could describe the emotions that would come in finding an infant thought to be sleeping actually to be dead. Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is the sudden death of an infant under one year of age which remains unexplained after a thorough case investigation, including performance of a complete autopsy, examination of the death scene, and review of the clinical history.

The risk of SIDS in the following groups exceeds that of the general population by as much as 5 to 10 times:

- Infants born weighing less than 3.5 pounds.
- Infants whose sibling died of SIDS.
- Infants exposed to cocaine, heroin, or methadone during the pregnancy.
- The second or succeeding child born to a teenage mother.
- Infants who have had an apparent life-threatening event.

As the experts continue to research SIDS, there are steps that caregivers can take:

1. Place infants to sleep on their backs, even though infants may sleep more soundly on their stomachs. Infants who sleep on their stomachs and sides have a higher rate of SIDS than infants who sleep on their backs.
2. Place infants to sleep in a baby bed with a firm mattress. There should be nothing in the bed but the baby - no cover-

ing, no pillows, no bumper pads and no toys. Soft mattresses and heavy covering are associated with SIDS.

3. Do not over-clothe the infant while he/she sleeps. Keep the room at a temperature that is comfortable for you. Overheating an infant may increase the risk for SIDS.
4. Avoid exposing the infant to tobacco smoke. Don't have your infant in the same house or car with someone who is smoking. The greater the exposure to tobacco smoke, the greater the risk of SIDS.
5. Breast-feed babies whenever possible. Breast milk decreases the occurrence of respiratory and gastrointestinal infections. Studies show that breast-fed babies have a lower SIDS rate.
6. Avoid exposing the infant to people with respiratory infections. Avoid crowds. Carefully clean anything that comes in contact with the baby. Have people wash their hands before holding or playing with your baby. SIDS often occurs in association with relatively minor respiratory (mild cold) and gastrointestinal infections.
7. Consider using home monitoring systems (apnea/bradycardia monitors) in an attempt to prevent sudden death in high-risk infants.

More information on SIDS can be found at the website for the **National SIDS/Infant Death Resource Center** (NSIDRC) at www.sidscenter.org.

No honey for babies

The Centers for Disease Control and the National Institute of Health monitor the health of the nation. Both agencies have stated that honey and corn syrup should not be given in any amount to infants under the age of one year.

Although there is no definite proof, there are indications that both of the above contain some botulism, which can be harmful to infants. This is because the infant's digestive system is not mature enough and has not grown enough protective bacteria to fight off botulism. Botulism can be fatal.

The authorities are recommending that NO honey or syrup be given, even the small amount from dipping a pacifier in honey. Corn syrup should NOT be added to formula to help prevent constipation. If a baby has problems with constipation, the physician will recommend a safer treatment.

Very often families make the mistake of thinking that their babies want the same seasonings, sweetness and saltiness that adults like. This is not true. Enjoying sweets and salt are learned. Something that may seem very bland and tasteless to adults is actually delicious to a baby.

DCFS follows the recommendations of the experts in advising all families to NOT give honey or syrup to children under the age of one.



Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council Bulletin

Implementation Plans

The Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council (Statewide) recently completed scoring of the 2005 Foster Parent Law Implementation Plans. Each DCFS Region and private agency must submit a plan detailing how its foster care program addresses the Foster Parent Law. In addition to scoring the plans, Statewide also is mandated to monitor the plans. Currently the members are reviewing the second group of agencies and regions as part of their process to ensure that plans are being implemented in the field. The members hold interviews with agency staff and conduct random phone interviews with caregivers. The task is serious and takes many hours of volunteer time. However, this work is designed to facilitate better outcomes for families.

Adolescent issues

Statewide has established a committee to work on adolescent issues. The workgroup reported that it is collaborating with the Division of Service Intervention on several topics including: transition programs, supports for parents of teens and the Youth In College Program. Statewide will offer its perspective on ways to support teens in their move to adulthood while living in a family setting.

System of Care

Statewide also has members working with the committee on the System of Care. The council members have worked with DCFS and DHS staff to advise on the implementation of the community based service network and the toll-free CARES line. This line is used for accessing services, placement stabilization, and psychiatric crisis intervention for children. Members are culling responses from caregivers who use the CARES line (800-345-9049) and making recommendations to ensure the highest level of effectiveness.

Clothing Vouchers

Statewide is working with DCFS administration to enhance the way initial clothing vouchers are provided to foster parents in DCFS-supervised homes. The goal is to make the clothing available in a timely manner and in a way that is convenient for caregivers. More information on this issue is expected soon.

All meetings of the Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council are open to the public. The final meeting of FY05 is set for May 20 at 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. in Room N-505 of the State of Illinois Building, 160 N. LaSalle, Chicago.

Who do you call when...

A child in your home is having a psychiatric crisis that may require hospitalization? Call the CARES line at 800-345-9049. However, if a child is a danger to himself or others, call 911 first. The CARES line is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

...You want information on becoming a foster parent or on adoption? The Adoption Information Center of Illinois (AICI) can answer your questions and get you started with the licensing process. Call 800-572-2390. AICI also maintains information about the children who are featured on the back page of the newsletter.

...You feel you aren't being treated fairly by DCFS or a private agency? After you've tried to resolve the issue with the caseworker and supervisors, then call the Advocacy Office at 800-232-3798.

...You need to report a child missing or have information about a youth who has run away? To report information on missing youth call 866-503-0184, 24 hours a day seven days a week.

...You have an idea for an article in the newsletter? Each region has a reporter to help gather local news. They are typically listed in the regional section of each edition. Or you can contact the Editor, Vanessa James, at 312-814-6824 by phone or e-mail vjames@idcfs.state.il.us



Adoption and Guardianship Preservation helps families hold on

Families created through adoption or guardianship may experience problems that require intensive services to help them gain stability and to reduce the risk of out-of-home placement. The Adoption and Guardianship Preservation Program recognizes that families built through adoption or guardianship may have characteristics significantly different from those created through birth. This can result in unique challenges for the family.

The Adoption and Guardianship Preservation Program helps families who often feel they are at the end of their rope. The program helps by offering the following family-centered support and services.

Comprehensive Assessment/Crisis Intervention

Preservation staff will respond by phone within 24 hours and make an in-home visit within three days. A therapist will help a family identify their own strengths, complete an assessment and develop a family treatment plan within 30 days of the referral to the program. The therapist will also provide the clinical services identified in the family treatment plan.

Support Groups

Support groups are offered for both parents and youth at times and locations that meet the family's needs.

Case Management/Advocacy Services

The preservation agency will provide some case management and advocacy services by linking families with other service providers. They may also participate in staffings and support the family while providing the services identified in the treatment plan.

Children's Mental Health Advocacy Services

Most preservation agencies have a person on staff who is knowledgeable in the area of mental health. If a child has significant mental health needs, the program will facilitate the recommended services.

Cash Assistance

If a family participating in the program experiences economic hardships or requires specialized services that cannot be obtained through other resources, a cash assistance payment (limited to \$500 per family per fiscal year) may be provided. Examples of cash assistance include: respite care, specialized camp, or other needed services where no other payment resource is available.

The key to preservation services is that they serve the whole family with the focus on keeping the family together. Preservation staff work with all members of the family, not just the identified



child, to provide both knowledge and skills directed toward working together as a family unit.

"Families who adopt or take guardianship of children served by DCFS are often relieved when they no longer have caseworkers in their lives. But, when the heat is on and a family's stability is at stake, it is important that we be there to help," said Dave Matthews, of Matthews and Associates, an adoption and guardianship preservation services provider in Herrin.

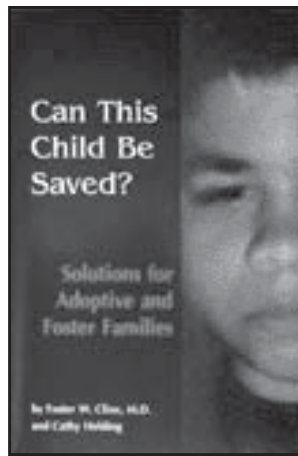
The adoption and guardianship preservation service agencies understand the rhythms of the special families they serve, and they are able to respond to crisis situations. Preservation services are provided to adoptive and guardianship families by eight private child welfare agencies that serve a specific geographic area. Families that need intensive intervention can call the Post Adoption and Guardianship Information and Referral line at 800-572-2390.

BOOK REVIEW: Can this child be saved? Solutions for adoptive and foster families by Dr. Foster Cline and Cathy Holding

It may be a bold suggestion, but I believe this book should be required reading for every potential adoptive parent. The first 100 pages give a very frank, stark and realistic description of children hurt by abuse and neglect. If after reading about the various syndromes, disorders and endless acronyms, you still want to adopt, then you are probably a good candidate. However, the point of this book is not to scare off potential parents. Instead, the remainder of the book offers solutions to help caregivers work with disturbed children.

Even the use of the word “disturbed” by the authors is done intentionally to give an indication of what caregivers are up against. It takes more than a red cape and a heart full of love to “save” a child. Dr. Cline and Holding in describing disturbed children do more than paint a bad news scenario. Rather, their frank presentation of facts helped make some of the more difficult behaviors more understandable. Sometimes just knowing that there are real, biological or psychological reasons behind what our kids put out can make it easier to cope.

The book offers practical tips for maintaining the mental health of the parents and other children in the home, while the adopted child heals. It covers topics including setting expectations, avoiding



frustration, educating teachers and even coping with false allegations of abuse that might arise.

Throughout the book, there is a message that children who have been damaged can heal. It will take more than a naïve notion of endless love. Cline and Holding combine their professional expertise and personal adoption experiences into a book that rings true. Longtime adoptive parents in the midst of struggles can find encouragement. Potential adoptive parents can take stock of their intentions and get prepared with suitable resources. Either way, an honest approach to helping children who have been hurt can help everyone involved.

This review was written by Vanessa James, Editor. The book is available for loan through the DCFS Lending Library or for purchase at through the Love and Logic Institute at 800-338-4065 or www.loveandlogic.com.

Families wanted for adoption study

Adoption researchers at Illinois State University want to learn more about how adoption affects youth. The Center for Adoption Studies and Attachment Lab would like to interview youth adopted from child welfare who are 15-17 years old.

The study will focus on finding out more about factors that lead to positive adoption adjustment, particularly the topics of attachment and identity. Participants will be compensated for their time with a \$25 gift card to Old Navy.

Interested individuals will be invited to an adoption agency in their local area. The study will take approximately two hours to complete. The adolescent will be given an interview, and both the teen and a parent will be asked to complete a set of questionnaires.

Prospective volunteers or those with questions can contact the Center for Adoption Studies at 309-438-8628 or send an email to: kkwoodm@ilstu.edu. If no one is available to answer your call, please leave a message stating that you're interested in the “Adopted Teen Study,” and leave your name, address, and phone numbers.





Adoption Advisory Council tackles training and support

The Illinois Adoption Advisory Council continues to track developing policy and offer recommendations to the Department. Below are highlights from recent meetings.

New Adoption Core Training

A committee of the Adoption Advisory Council is working with DCFS staff to develop the new curriculum for adoption core training. This training is for DCFS and private agency staff. Many of the issues that the Council is addressing can be traced back to the need for improved staff training on adoption-specific topics. The Council is eager to add input to the work of the DCFS Office of Training and is pleased with the progress thus far.

New Adoption Support Groups

The Adoption Advisory Council has made identifying more avenues of support one of its main objectives. Council members are working with the North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC) on an effort that has led to four new support groups and four rejuvenated groups in the Chicago area. The NACAC program provides funds and training to make these groups viable. More information on the groups will be included in the Guide to Local Support Groups

that will be in the next issue of Families Now and Forever.

Respite Care Grant

The Council requested a report from the Respite Care Project Team, because the Council serves that project in an advisory capacity. The Respite Care Program is a three-year grant to provide respite services to adoptive families raising children with severe medical complications or severe behavioral/emotional disorders. The team is working with eligible families identified through the adoption/guardianship preservation agencies. Thus far, more than 7,000 hours of respite care services have been provided to 125 children participating in the program. Reports were that families saw improved behavior, children found true peer groups and parents were able to "refuel." The program is slated for completion in September.

AAC welcomes newest members



Ron Tyler

Ron Tyler runs an adoption/day respite program in Peoria through a Family Preservation Services grant. The program provides an educational experience for children who are suspended or expelled from schools. Tyler also runs several community-based programs for adopted/foster children.



Jackie Sharp

Jackie Sharp is an administrator at Lakeside Community Committee in Chicago. She over-

sees child welfare programs. Sharp has been a guest at many council meetings and the Council is pleased to welcome her as a member.

The Illinois Adoption Council has a few more openings for members, including:

- Cook North - 2 adoptive parents; 1 adopted person
- Cook Central - 1 adoptive parent
- Cook South - 1 adoptive parent
- Central Region - 1 adopted person
- Joint Child Welfare Advisory Council/Cook Adoptive Parent
- Joint Expert/Child Welfare Advisory Council member

Call the Office of Foster Parent Support Services at 217-524-2422 from more information or visit the Council's page on the DCFS web site at www.state.il.us/dcf. The Council members are appointed by the DCFS Director. Membership includes adoptive parents, professionals and adopted individuals. All meetings of the Council are open to the public. The final meeting of FY05 is set for June 3 at the Hawthorn Suites, located at 1 Lyons Court in Bloomington. Meetings begin at 10 a.m. and end at 3 p.m.

Tell it like it is: Readers respond

Families Now and Forever wants to hear the “real deal” on caring for children from those who know best – you! Here is what you had to say to the question: ***What do you do to find emotional/social support in relation to your foster/adoptive family life?***

When we adopted our child he had great issues. Later we started him in Theraplay. It would have made a huge difference in our attachment issues if we had done it earlier. I think it is a great way to go through some of the things the child missed early on. We felt like we had little to no support in the first couple of years. This therapy has helped enormously.

Kathy, adoptive mother

The new question is: ***What types of things have you done with your older children to help prepare them for adulthood?***

You can contact me with your response by e-mail at vjames@idcfs.state.il.us, by phone at 312-814-6824 or by fax at 312-814-4131. I am looking forward to hearing from you.

Vanessa James, Editor

Publication Update

Please be aware that this issue of Families Now and Forever does not include regional inserts. There have been many organizational changes among the DCFS regions that affected the regional reporting. Please look forward to finding the regional inserts again in the next issue. Also, if you have ideas about local programs or information you would like to see in the regional inserts, please direct that to the regional reporter or the editor.

Regional Reporters

Sari Rowitz ~ Cook North ~ 312-328-2484

Donna Cain ~ Cook Central ~ 773-854-0636

Bobby Evans ~ Cook South ~ 773-371-6146

Diane Mitchell ~ Northern ~ 815-967-3727

Mary Bullock ~ Central ~ 309-671-7900

Michael Bollman ~ Southern ~ 618-394-2137



***Illinois Families
Now and Forever***

Rod R. Blagojevich, Governor

Bryan Samuels, DCFS Director

Publisher:

Office of Foster Parent Support
Services, Velma Williams,
Deputy Director

Editor: Vanessa James

Phone: 312/814-6824

Fax: 312/814-4131

E-mail: vjames@idcfs.state.il.us

Regional Editors

Central – Mary Bullock

Northern – Diane Mitchell

Southern – Michael Bollman

Cook North – Sari Rowitz

Cook Central – Donna Cain

Cook South – Bobby Evans

Graphics: Jenny Florent

Printing: DCFS Print Shop

Purpose: To help busy families more effectively parent children currently or formerly in DCFS care. To bring them the best information from the most knowledgeable sources. To promote statewide teamwork in finding permanency for children.

Address Changes: Families must notify their licensing representative, who will notify DCFS. Agencies should change office addresses or request staff copies through the Editor.

Illinois Families Now and Forever is published six times a year, bi-monthly, and mailed to licensed foster parents, unlicensed relative caregivers, adoptive and guardianship families receiving subsidies, all DCFS staff and private agency staff as ordered. Material may not be reprinted in whole, in part or in any form whatsoever without permission from the Editor or DCFS. Opinions expressed by experts writing articles are no substitute for professional answers or opinions about a family's or child's specific situation. Consult a competent professional for answers to your specific questions.

A family for me

Jovan [7455] Jovan, 13, loves animals! He enjoys playing with the dog in his current home and likes to visit the animals at the local Humane Society whenever he has time. Jovan also enjoys attending soccer games, especially when an adult that he cares about is accompanying him. After school, he likes to listen to music and play on the computer.

His worker said Jovan has a great smile and wants to please others. He loves to receive individual attention from adults. The caregiver for Jovan would be loving, encouraging, and patient. You can give clear guidelines and be firm about consequences. Jovan said he would like a family in which he feels he belongs and is loved.

Keith [7365] Keith, 12, is a pleasant young man who always has a big smile on his face. He loves to play with other children, especially when they can bounce a basketball or ride bikes together. Keith also enjoys playing with dogs – as long as they're friendly! Keith is always polite and considerate with what he has to say.

His teacher said Keith works very hard and never quits trying when he has difficulty. His foster mother said he is a sweet, loving young man who likes hugs. His worker said Keith is extremely respectful and well behaved at home and school. The family for Keith would provide him with lots of attention and encouragement. You can help him maintain contact with his current foster parent, with whom he is very close. Keith said he would like a family to love and one that will love him in return.

Matthew [4838] Matthew (Matt) 15, is a "hands-on" guy who is passionate

about working on cars and houses. Matt loves to figure out how things operate. He is also a good athlete who excels at football and bowling. In his free time, Matt likes to sit back with his CD player and listen to music.

His workers said that Matt has a nice sense of humor, displays good sportsmanship, and gets along with others. He is always willing to help out.

The caregiver to Matt can provide love and understanding, and you can support his interests. Matt would like a family with young parents and teenage sisters or brothers. He needs a family who lives in Illinois, preferably in the northern part of the state.

Rosemary [7481] Rosemary, 13, is a sweet, loving young lady who enjoys going to church and singing in the choir. She likes living in the countryside and loves home cooking. At school, she enjoys many of her classes, especially science, math, English, and spelling.

Her foster parent said Rosemary is smart and loving. She is helpful around the house and is willing to do chores. Her worker said Rosemary enjoys acting and other performance-oriented activities. As a parent to Rosemary, you can be caring and kind, and you can help Rosemary remain active in church. She would like a family who will help her stay in contact with her younger brothers.

Telicia [7470] Telicia, 13, loves books! Her reading skills are very advanced for her age. While shopping and other exciting activities interest her, she always likes to set aside quiet time for thinking and reading. Telicia is very helpful, especially with her

younger sister, whom she visits twice a month. She is also good at cooperating with caseworkers, and has helped them with scheduling visits and with directions to her home.

Her foster parent said Telicia is fun and outgoing. Her teacher said she is very smart and helpful in class. The family for Telicia would be patient and loving. You can provide a safe and stable home and give Telicia clear rules and guidelines. You can help her maintain contact with her sister.

Troy & Tre [7366-67] These twin brothers, 13, enjoy each other's company and want to be adopted together. Troy (left) is a friendly young man who is good at expressing his thoughts and feelings. He excels at sports, especially baseball and football. He likes to build model cars and trucks. Troy also enjoys pets and is willing to care for them. Tre (right) is generous and compassionate. He likes to play board games and draw cartoon characters. Tre also enjoys sports, and he likes basketball and soccer in addition to his brother's favorite pastimes.

Their foster parent reported that Troy and Tre are respectful and affectionate. They are eager for a positive experience with an adoptive family. The family for them would provide lots of love and attention. You can be patient as they make the transition to your family. Tre said he would like to join an active family that has a mother and a father. Both young men would like to maintain contact with their sister and maternal family members.

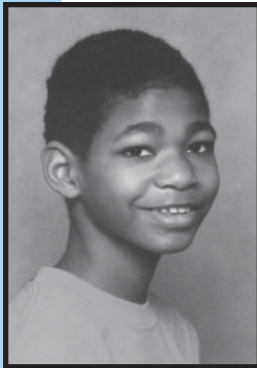
If you are interested in adopting one of these children or learning about other children waiting to be adopted, please call the Adoption Information Center of Illinois at 1-800-572-2390, or see the AICI web site – www.adoptinfo-il.org.

Illinois Families Now and Forever
Vanessa James, Editor
Department of Children & Family Services
100 West Randolph - 6th Floor
Chicago, Illinois 60601

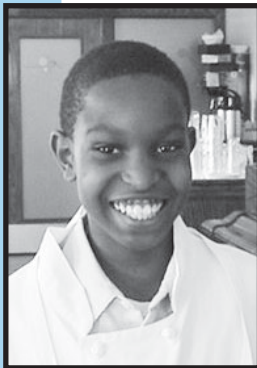
PRESRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
SPRINGFIELD, IL
PERMIT NO. 763

DO YOU KNOW A FAMILY FOR ME?

Call the Adoption Information Center of Illinois 800-572-2390.



Jovan [7455]



Keith [7365]



Matthew [4838]



Rosemary [7481]



Telicia [7470]



Troy & Tre [7366-67]

Inside this issue:

- Page 1 Find services via Child and Youth Investment Teams
- Page 2 Ideas for managing behavior with "Love and Logic"
- Page 3 Get ready for summer camp
- Page 4-5 Safety Feature: Product recalls and lowering SIDS risk
- Page 6 Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council Bulletin
- Page 7-8 Adoption/Guardianship feature
- page 9 Adoption Advisory Council Update
- Page 10 Tell it like it is - Reader Feedback

Call the Adoption Information Center of Illinois 800-572-2390.